
Titon, Jeff Todd (Brown University)

Current Institution Brown University (Professor of Music)

Areas of Expertise

Blues music, religious folk music, African American and African Diaspora.Bio

Jeff Todd Titon received the B.A. from Amherst College, and the M.A. (in English) and Ph.D. (in American Studies) from the University of Minnesota, where he studied ethnomusicology with Alan Kagan, writing his dissertation on blues music. He has done fieldwork on religious folk music, blues, and old-time fiddling, with grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities. For two years he was the guitarist in the Lazy Bill Lucas Blues Band, a group that appeared in the 1970 Ann Arbor Blues Festival; in the 1980s he took up the fiddle and banjo, and most of his music-making today involves string band music from the Upper South. He also repairs and restores violins. He is the author or editor of seven books, including *Early Downhome Blues* (1977; 2nd edition, University of North Carolina Press, 1994), which won the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award; *Worlds of Music* (five editions since 1984, with translations into Italian and Chinese); *Powerhouse for God* (a book, record, and documentary film); and most recently *Old-Time Kentucky Fiddle Tunes* (University Press of Kentucky, 2001), and *American Musical Traditions* (Gale, 2002), chosen by *Library Journal* as one of the outstanding reference works of 2003. His work in applied ethnomusicology was the subject of an interview by John Fenn in the fall, 2003 issue of *Folklore Forum*. In 1991 he wrote a hypertext-multimedia computer program on old-time Kentucky fiddler Clyde Davenport that is now regarded as a model for weblike interactive computer representations of people making music. His current projects include ongoing fieldwork with Old Regular Baptists in eastern Kentucky, with whom he has produced two CDs for *Smithsonian Folkways* (1997 and 2003); a DVD on the life and preaching of the Rev. C. L. Franklin, father of the singer Aretha Franklin, which will include video footage of his chanted sermons; and fiction writing. From 1990 to 1995 he was editor of *Ethnomusicology*, the *Journal of the Society for Ethnomusicology*. He is a Fellow of the American Folklore Society. His teaching began at Tufts University, where he was assistant professor of English, then associate professor of English and music. He has been a visiting professor at Carleton College, Amherst College, Berea College, and Indiana University. Since 1986 he has been professor of music and director of the Ph.D. program in music (ethnomusicology) at Brown.

<http://research.brown.edu/research/profile.php?id=10318> Contact Information

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